

REMARKS

Claim Rejections:

Claims 1-20 are all of the claims that have been examined in the present application, and currently claims 1-8, 10-18, and 20 stand rejected.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection - Claims 1-8, 10-18, and 20:

Claims 1-4, 10, 11-14, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,033,169 to Bindon in view of Adams et al., of record. In view of the following discussion, Applicant respectfully traverses the above rejection.

Applicant notes that Figure 4B, of Bindon, teaches a member 10 which has a projection 26 that is used to retain a portion of the rope/string 32 which passes through the member 10. The use of the projection 26 creates the loops 30. However, the Bindon reference discloses that the slot be equal to the height of the rope. *See* col. 3, lines 26-29. This is not the case in the present invention, where the first retaining means comprises a catch provided with a groove of width less than the cross-sectional width of the cord. Thus, the combination of the Bindon and Adams references fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that neither the Bindon or Adams references teach or suggest the present invention, either individually or in combination. As such, Applicant submits that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness with respect to the above rejected claims, as required under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Accordingly, Applicant hereby requests the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the above 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
Application Number 10/084,056

Our Ref: Q68613
Art Unit: 3727

Applicant also submits that the claims 5-7 and 15-17 are also allowable, at least by reason of their dependence. Namely, neither of the Prosen or Bealmar references cure the deficient teachings of Bindon and Adams.

New Claims:

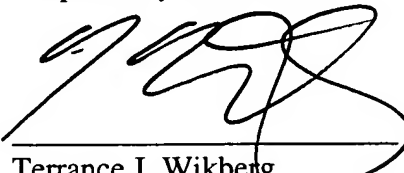
Applicant has also added new claims 21-30 to further claim the present invention. Applicant submits that these claims are also allowable over the prior art of record.

Conclusion:

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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